

Global Cultures in Local Economies: Case Study of an Ethnic Fast Food Restaurant¹

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This paper examines a novel type of ethnic fast-food restaurant called *chaat* café. Chaat is a roadside snack food in North India made of a crunchy mix of fillings and topped with a tangy sauce. This kind of food is pre-prepared and mixed fresh on the spot.² Chaat restaurants in India can vary from an established air-conditioned restaurant to a road-side vendor. However, because the food is pre-made or quickly fried, majority of Indian Chaat restaurants or stalls prepare and cook the food in the same front-zone where the food is sold and consumed. In the last ten years, Chaat cafes have become popular in major American cities.³ The Indian chaat store has emerged as a good and lucrative ethnic business and has given the traditional curry restaurants a run for their money.⁴ The emergence of the Chaat restaurant is not a whimsical fad or an isolated ethnic phenomenon catering to an immigrant niche market.

My central argument is that the chaat café is part of a cross-cultural urban vernacular landscape that is a product of recent physical, demographic, economic, and political restructuring of major American cities. These cafés are new public spaces. By studying the growth, layout, and politics of place within these settings we can study how global and regional processes often get articulated locally.

Specialty ethnic restaurants are sites where food is produced, consumed, and exchanged as a cultural commodity. Here difference, both symbolic and real, is expressed through cuisine. Until recently most Indian restaurants in the United States were famous for its curries that required skilled kitchen

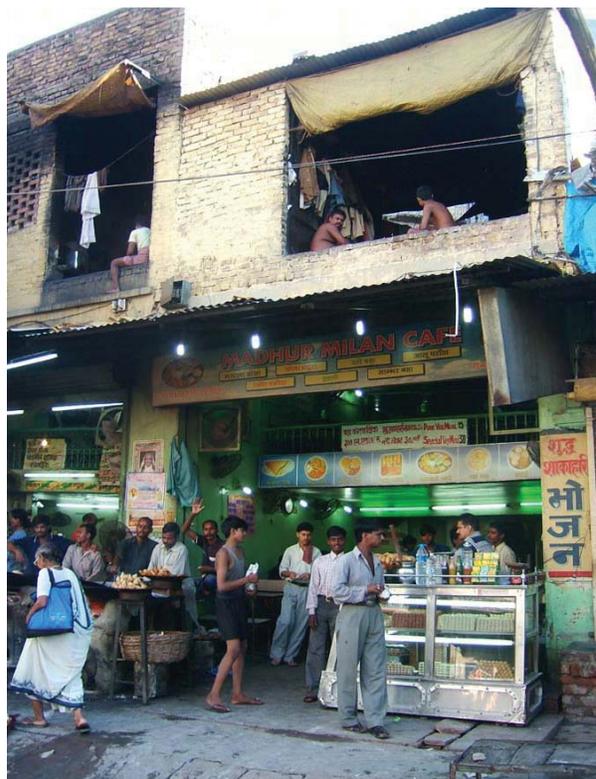


Figure 1: Chaat restaurant in India.

staff. For example, between 1980 and 2002 there were 8-10 Indian restaurants in the city of Berkeley serving the traditional fare of North or South Indian curries. By 2003 *chaat* restaurants overtook them and a total of eleven chaat restaurants appeared in the city, some of them only a counter inside a pre-existing restaurant or grocery store.

By examining how the politics of ethnicity and land use are related to the economy, this paper argues that research of ethnic spaces should no longer assume autochthonous cultural practices of a social group carried out in relative isolation in ethnic ghettos. Instead ethnic spaces and practices traverse the globalized world as symbols, discourses, and customs that different user-groups adopt for symbolic purposes. The production, reproduction, and consumption of "cultural difference" in ethnic restaurants should not be confused with cultural and ethnic authenticity. Borrowing Arjun Appadurai's notion of flows, the paper argues that emerging chaat restaurants are local sites where global flows of images, cultural forms, culinary practices and taste, meet flows of capital, resources, and labor. This paper focuses on VIKS, a pioneering chaat restaurant that profited out of economic transformations in the Northern California Bay Area. This restaurant and others like it contributed to a local economy made of cosmopolitan gourmet ghettos in Berkeley.

According to Sharon Zukin ethnic restaurants represent the symbolic urban economy of globalization. A new menu of global cuisine has emerged in American metropolitan centers. Wraps, organic snacks, fusion food, finger-food, and fast-food attract urban professionals working in service and information sectors. These cosmopolitan customers work in media, advertising, legal, consultancy practices, real-estate industries, banking and economic services. They are young, well traveled, and mixed in their racial, ethnic, and national origins. They experience and sustain a new economy that is variously referred to as the post-fordist, flexible economy, the informational economy, or the global economy.⁵

Saskia Sassen shows that this new economy has given rise to a spilt workforce made of highly paid skilled professionals and very low-paid, immigrant labor.⁶ Zukin's study of ethnic restaurants in New York city shows that the back-zones or the food preparation areas in these places are populated by low-paid immigrant workers of all ethnicities (Mexicans, Indians, Russians!) while the hypervisible, sign-infested front zones are popularized by an upscale, cosmopolitan, professional clientele. Zukin argues that these restaurants serving global culinary culture are sites where "power, politics and social and cultural hierarchies are made physical

through architecture."⁷ Valle and Torres describing Mexican restaurants in Los Angeles argue that ethnic restaurants provide a critical infrastructure of conspicuous consumption and manufacture "the edible multicultural texts and symbols upon which a global city's pluralistic self image is constructed."⁸

VIKS RESTAURANT OF BERKELEY

VIKS café of Berkeley is a small fast-food restaurant attached to an established Indian grocery store. In 1987 the owners of VIKS rented a warehouse on Allston Way, south of University Avenue and became part of a growing ethnic landscape along this street. Other ethnic stores located in this region include those selling clothes, groceries, music, baggage, jewelry, and other cultural artifacts to a largely South Asian immigrant consumer base.

The landscape of University Avenue differs from the traditional geography of ethnic enclaves because it doesn't sustain a local and nearby ethnic residential settlement. Rather it is part of an extended automobile landscape that serves a regional conurbation beyond the city of Berkeley extending from San Jose to Santa Rosa and San Francisco to Livermore. This makes VIKS part of a geographically dispersed regional ethnic landscape that burgeoned with the Silicon Valley economy in the 1990s.

There are some important differences that will not be discussed in this paper. For instance, VIKS looks different from other Indian stores along University Avenue. Unlike other Indian stores there is a total lack of signage, advertisement, or markings of difference on the exterior façade of the warehouse. This is because when VIKS started as a wholesale retailer, the typical wholesale client knew where the store was located. VIKS didn't need to capture the attention of individual shoppers who drove into Berkeley with hypervisible signs and advertisements.



Figure 2. VIKS Chaat Café and Grocery Store

VIKS began as a wholesale Indian beer and spice outlet for Northern California but soon expanded into retail sales. On weekends Indian families would drive down to Berkeley from the surrounding cities and shop at VIKS before proceeding to patronize other stores along University Avenue. By 1992 the owners added a small weekend fast-food counter near the entrance in order to serve a quick snack lunch and chaat for these families.

VIKS can also be mapped as part of an international network of chaat cafes. My research shows that emerging chaat cafes around the world use a common set of names, storefront decorations, and symbols as a branding technique. Whether it is located in Singapore, London, or Indianapolis, chaat restaurants are part of a global flow of cultural spaces, images and practices that Appadurai calls *ethnoscapes* and *ideoscapes*.⁹

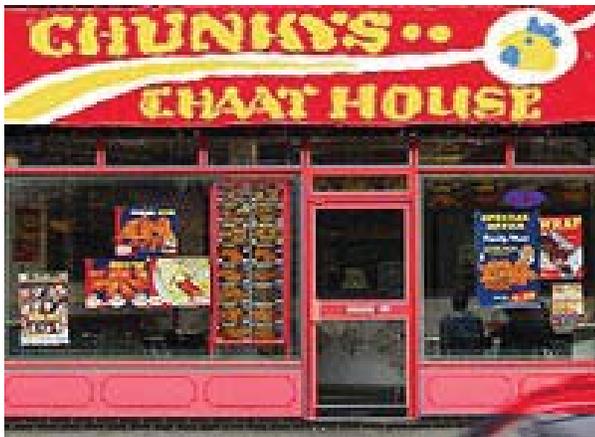


Figure 3. Chaat cafes in London (above) and Berkeley (below)

Reading chaat cafes therefore requires a multi-pronged strategy of analysis and representation. This methodological strategy, that Peters call bifocality, locates VIKS within a global ecumene while simultaneously considering the local, urban and regional specificity within which this cafe operates.¹⁰ Bifocality makes it difficult to read the ethnic restaurant as separate and distinct from its geographic and historic context.

REFRAMING THE ETHNIC DOMAIN

Theory of locational clustering used to explain ethnic enterprise presumes a nearby ethnic population-base to supply entrepreneurs and products necessary to sustain an ethnic economy. The importance of landownership and geographical clustering in ethnic enclaves is mentioned as important factors that sustain ethnic economies. Researchers such as Oliver Zunz studying Detroit, Bodnar, Simon and Weber examining Italian and Polish ethnic groups, and Herbert Gans in his study of Boston, have shown how homeownership and residential segregation are factors that generate community coherence and ethnic entrepreneurship.¹¹ The two major theories, the niche-market theory and ethnic entrepreneurship theory see ethnic economy as distinct from mainstream economy in that it supplies goods and demands for a specific immigrant population, or demand niche.

Arguing that a balanced supply-demand approach is missing in the ethnic economy literature researchers Waldinger, Ward, and Aldrich propose that we need to examine the larger economic environment within which the ethnic entrepreneur operates.¹² They propose a theoretical model of studying ethnic enterprise called "interactionism." According to Light and Gold this model "claims that the entrepreneurial performance of groups depends upon the fit between what they have to offer (supply) and what the market requires (demand). The better the fit the more entrepreneurs and the same group experiences a good fit in some places and a poor fit in others."¹³

Light and Gold point out that such thinking assumes that the "ethnic economy consists of co-ethnic self-employed and employers and their co-ethnic employees. Whatever is not part of the ethnic economy belongs to the general labor market."¹⁴ Such theories might have worked for eth-

nic enclaves, but as Ilsoo Kim points out in the case of recent Korean immigrants, geographically dispersed ethnic landscapes operate differently than ethnic ghettos.¹⁵ Zelinsky and Lee explain the emerging ethnic communities that lack proximity through a concept they call heterolocalism.¹⁶ Rick Bonus' work on Filipino stores, Alfred Yee's work on Chinese supermarkets in Northern California, Joseph Wood's work on Vietnamese suburban place-making, and Sharon Zukin's analysis of ethnic restaurants in New York shows that ethnic enterprise can no longer be explained through theories of locational clustering.¹⁷ These scholars propose that non-ethnic factors such as national, regional and urban economy and policies affect ethnic enterprise.¹⁸ In his research on Filipino stores, Rick Bonus mentions that "although it is reasonable to assume that the stores were purposely built at sites where Filipinos worked, and thus where prospective customers would be located, it is tempting to draw parallels between 'ethnic' clustering and city zoning policies." VIKS too is an example of a business that was affected by urban processes set in motion by the economic boom of the nineties, the growth of information industries in the Bay Area, and the planning policies of the City of Berkeley.

VIKS is located in historic West Berkeley that used to be an ethnically mixed industrial and working class neighborhood during the 19th and early 20th century.¹⁹ By the mid- and late-twentieth century West Berkeley became a neighborhood of disrepute – perceptions of crime, prostitution, low rent, poverty, declining properties, and large empty warehouses, made this an undesirable place to start a business.²⁰ Nevertheless, by the late 1980s many immigrant Indian entrepreneurs attracted by low rents and the proximity to the freeway opened new stores along University Avenue, a major East-West street connecting downtown Berkeley and the University of California to Interstate 80. A unique ethnic Indian landscape grew along University Avenue, west of San Pablo Avenue and economically rejuvenated this area.

By the late 1990s redevelopment and gentrification efforts by the City of Berkeley transformed West Berkeley. The West Berkeley Plan, a long-term plan for the area between San Pablo Avenue and the Eastshore Freeway was a policy document drawn up by the city in 1997 in response to the

economic boom in the Silicon Valley. This boom had resulted in high property rents in South Bay. Easy access to San Francisco and South Bay made the West Berkeley area very desirable for information technology (IT) businesses, advertising agencies, graphic design offices, architectural and landscape architectural businesses, artist units, and professional services. The plan was intended to guide the development of West Berkeley until at least the year 2005. It set forth key land use, environmental, economic, transportation, housing and social services, and physical form (urban design, historic preservation, open space) policies for West Berkeley. Under this Plan, Fourth Street north of University Avenue was earmarked by the City of Berkeley as a mixed-use (primarily shopping and office) zone anchored by the Spenger's Restaurant on Fourth Street and University Avenue. The City planned this as a regional retail node to cater to customers from surrounding towns. The Plan encouraged in-fill developments with light industrial, small-scale office, and live-work uses. In 2001 the Berkeley City Manager reported to the City Council that in 2000 there was "a greater level of construction of new offices and conversion of warehouse and light industrial space to office uses in the MU/LI district as well as in other West Berkeley manufacturing districts than in the previous three years."²¹ The plan also specified that new retail establishments should not spread south of University Avenue. Therefore while restaurants developed north of University Avenue -- along Fourth Street earmarked for such growth -- no new restaurants appeared in the vicinity of the office developments. By 1999,



Figure 4. Development along Fourth Street North of University Avenue

because of its isolated location next to the new offices, VIKS was one of the main lunch destinations for the local professional customers and attracted a large number of non-Indian clients.

Indira supervises the grocery store counter. Wife of the owner of VIKS, she explains that they “never intended to be part of this redevelopment scheme” and indeed, the crammed interiors of VIKS, its largely ethnic customers, exotic yet not so presentable interiors, was not designed to attract the white urban middle-class.

Local development trends affected the growth of this restaurant. Evidence of growth or change in VIKS can be studied by looking at the customer base and profits, that is, through economic and demographic analysis. However, the physical landscape also served as a documentary evidence of changes. Physical changes and transformations of the interior layout and merchandise of the store accommodated economic and demographic changes. Such physical transformations, in turn, changed ethnic customs and practices. That is, changes in the material world and cultural practices affected each other in a dialectical way. This point is important because the evolution and popularity of fast food cafes often leads to amnesia of this relationship between the material and social. Repeated over a period of time, reproduced across space, the chaat café becomes a legitimate artifact of cultural difference. That it came out of very specific circumstances is eventually forgotten and this new space and activities within it enter public perceptions as a timeless (reified) example of ethnic space and exotic culinary culture. We forget that ethnic spaces are products of circumstances, that traditions are invented.

In the next section we will examine how the interior layout of VIKS transformed to accommodate changes and necessities of time. An argument for a diachronic lens for understanding culture and the built environment underpins this section. If we look at VIKS synchronically we will read it merely as an ethnic space. In applying a diachronic lens we will be able to see how ethnic space is reinvented incessantly to address changing social, economic, and political contexts.

Changing Layout of VIKS

Chaat stores in India are not sit-in, formal places. Most of the ingredients are pre-cooked and mixed on the spot. Hence chaat stores don't need elaborate kitchens or demarcated cooking spaces. Going for chaat, is a social act with the same casual sociability as going for a beer.²² Unlike a traditional restaurant, the food production areas in a chaat restaurant in India are often located in the front section of these stores. In its initial incarnation, the chaat counter in VIKS recreated this informal layout. But soon, the interior layout of VIKS changed to cater to a changing lunch crowd. By 1999, the weekday lunch crowd consisted of mainly non-Indian customers. The owners decided to move the chaat counter to the back of the store in order to avoid crowding and confusion in the front that resulted out of the Indian grocery store customers jostling with the café customers.

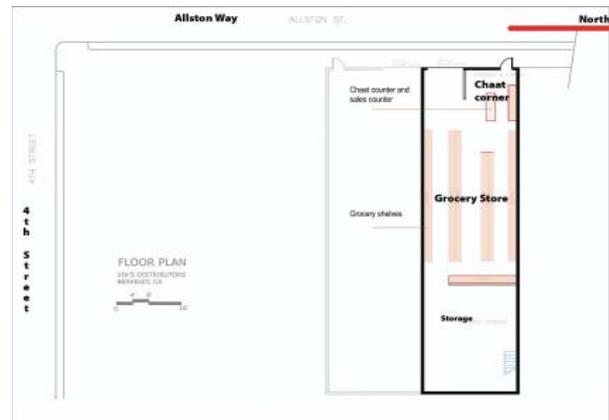


Figure 5. VIKS Layout 1987-92

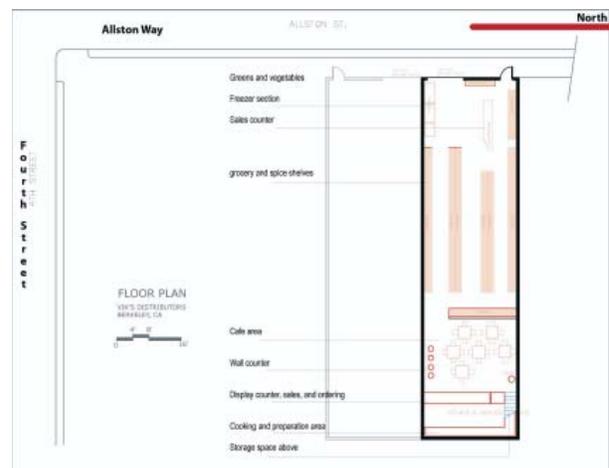


Figure 6. VIKS layout 1998-99

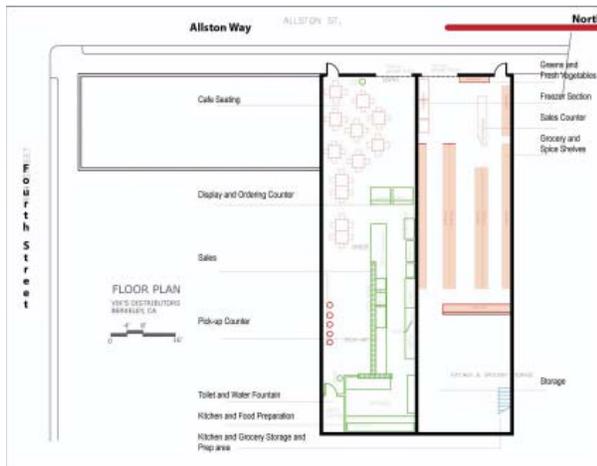


Figure 7. VIKS layout 2000

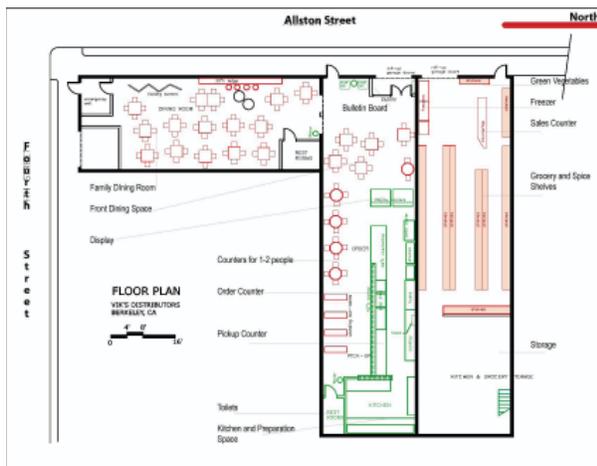


Figure 8. VIKS layout 2004

VIKS' popularity led to other new copycat chaat cafes in Berkeley in special locations such as near downtown to cater to the mixed ethnicity lunch crowds from the nearby offices.²³

In 2000 VIKS owners were forced to move the restaurant section to the next-door warehouse space. By 2004, the continuing popularity of VIKS made further demands on its interior space. Sam Whiting writing for *San Francisco Chronicle* quoted local resident Satterlee, "On weekends, it is mobbed ... You can stand in line for half an hour, but you'll see everybody in the neighborhood."²⁴ So, VIKS expanded again.

The 2004 layout of the café no longer resembled a chaat house in India or the original chaat coun-

ter of 1992. Rather it reflected the changing business, clientele, and neighborhood economy. While the grocery and spice store interiors remained exactly as it was ten years ago, the café saw many renovations.

There are more differences between the grocery store and the restaurants that reflect how the two spaces responded to different contexts and forces. The grocery store shelves lack labels. The wall hangings, the faded Indian flag, Indian beers, religious paraphernalia, and the native language newspapers, -- that only an Indian, South Asian, or individuals intimately familiar with the culture understand -- symbolically reinforce in-group solidarity. The grocery store interior resembles a quintessential niche market and a community domain.²⁵ An elderly lady speaking in Hindi or Gujarati mans the counter. She speaks to her South Asian customers in Hindi and her Gujarati customers in their native tongue. She remembers customers by name and is familiar with their shopping habits. She manages in broken English and is often helped by an Indian man whose English is not very good either but who clearly understands and knows the names of the goods held at the back. In other words those in the grocery store speak the language of the insider. Insider's knowledge produces and reproduces the symbolic economy of cultural difference in this space.²⁶

In contrast, the material culture of the café is cosmopolitan. Festive wall color, posters of exotic locales in India, and the Air India Maharaja doll sustain a symbolic economy of cultural difference oriented towards westerners – similar to what Kay Anderson terms "a Western construction" in her work on Vancouver's Chinatown. A bulletin board space in the new renovation located near the café entrance carries announcements of new age yoga and meditation classes, self-realization workshops, and organic food! The interior of the café is clearly defined and the activity areas clearly delineated – the counter neatly separated from the preparation area, seating space, and self-serve silverware and plate counter. At the café counter the servers speak fluent English. Some of them are Anglo Americans. In the back kitchen are low-paid Mexican immigrant workers along with Indian workers. Serving chaat requires fewer skills than preparing food in traditional restaurants. Non-skilled – and often non Indian -- workers can be used to pre-

pare chaat, because, once produced, chaat can be made easily by mixing the right ingredients.

The customers in the grocery store are, almost always, immigrants. They are mixed and varied belonging to different generations and subgroups within the immigrant community. Most originate from the subcontinent or trace their ancestry to the region. Others belong to linguistic, religious, regional subgroups. Some customers are Middle Eastern, East African, and South East Asian immigrants. Few native born Americans visit the grocery store too, but their numbers are small compared to the former. The café crowd has a mix of occupation, ethnicity, and cohort group from all over the Bay Area. New York Times reported with wonderment that this Indian café has become a local hangout – even for the staff of Alice Water’s upscale French restaurant Chez Panisse!²⁷



Figure 9. Interior view of the Grocery Store

One finds a confluence of different social circles and networks in VIKS. The public realm of the immigrant community overlaps the urban public domain, ethnic networks of friends and family intersect networks based on non-ethnic relationships, and professional networks coincide with familial and community spaces. Hence the traditional definition of ethnic stores as community space where coethnics congregate does not hold true for this café-store space.²⁸ Appadurai’s various scapes converge in VIKS making it a spatially articulated node within geographically mobile flows of people, objects, ideas, capital, and policies.²⁹



Figure 10. Two Interior views of the Café

The incessant changes in the layout of VIKS are more than an attempt to solve a crowding or space problem. By constantly redefining the boundaries between the grocery store and the café the storeowner attempts to rearrange the many conflicting domains within which his business operates. The reconfiguration of the interior space becomes a way by which he and his cosmopolitan clientele balance, respond, and adapt to the contingencies of daily life, needs of the market, and policies of the city government. Ethnicity and indeed the immigrant cultural landscape becomes a site of capitalism’s creative destruction where the market incessantly redefines itself.³⁰

By simultaneously mapping VIKS at multiple scales -- within a global public culture, an automobile-based networked geography of Indian immigrants in the Bay Area, a local pedestrian-based area from where majority non-ethnic customers come, and the personal scale of the store interiors where Anglo, Indian, and Mexican individuals con-

sume and reproduce immigrant culture in different ways, we generate multiple cartographies that challenge the way we understand the relationship between place and culture. When the boundary between ethnic and mainstream domain is blurred by local articulations of a global public culture we can neither read the American everyday landscape solely as a material expression of a local culture nor be blind to the transnational influences that mediate and transform the way we perceive and reproduce our everyday environment.



Figure 11. Chaat café in Indianapolis

I will end with an example of another chaat café in Indianapolis. This grocery store complex located in a strip mall on the outskirts of the city is an everyday sight within the American suburban landscape. The chaat shop is in a large warehouse space and is indistinguishable from the surrounding spaces. The sole visual expressions of difference are the store name signs and window front posters. Nevertheless these spaces are critical infrastructure upon which a global city's pluralistic self image is sustained. As American society changes, research on quotidian ethnic landscapes need to look beyond extraordinary and exotic spaces. Jettisoning the parochial framework within which it operates, the new scholarship needs to examine new ways by which the world outside America is changing mainstream culture, places, and indeed the way we define ourselves.

ENDNOTES

1. The author will like to thank moderator Rebecca Williamson and three anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions.
2. A New York Times article mentions that "Chaat is made of fried bits of chickpeas, puffed rice, browned mashed-potato patties, fresh ginger, mung bean sprouts, spice-dusted toasted lentils and topped with a tangy powder made from green mangoes, mint, cumin, pomegranate, black salt, cilantro, tamarind sauce, and yogurt." The Times quoted Dave Sharma, owner of Amma, a midtown New York chaat restaurant.

Julia Moskin, "Mumbai to Midtown, Chaat Hits the Spot," In New York Times, Dining & Wine Section, March 9, 2005 < <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/full-page.html?sec=travel&res=9C00E1D91F3DF93AA35750C0A9639C8B63&fta=y>>, (November 20, 2007)

3. Stett Holbrook, "Fast Food Notion," In MetroActive, August 1-7, 2007, < <http://www.metroactive.com/metro/08.01.07/chaat-0731.html>> (November 20, 2007)

Moskin, "Mumbai to Midtown."

Daniel Mochon, "Samosa House menu covers Indian regional specialties," In The Poughkeepsie Journal, accessed in Poughkeepsie Journal internet site, October 4, 2007, < <http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200771004021>> (November 20, 2007).

4. Moskin, "Mumbai to Midtown"

5. David Harvey refers to post-fordist and flexible economy in his discussion of post-modernity. He refers to central changes in the way humans experience time and space in this new era. Manuel Castells refers to the new informational economy as he talks about flows and networks as structures through which we experience our worlds. Others who refer to the social and material conditions of the informational economy include Saskia Sassen and Jonathan Friedman. Sharon Zukin and Ulf Hannerz's work on the spaces and cultural forms resulting from such an economic regime also contributes to this discussion.

David Harvey. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change.* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990).

Manuel Castells. *The Informational City: Information Technology, Economic Restructuring, and the Urban Regional Process.* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1989)

Jonathan Friedman. "Being in the World: Globalization and Localization," In *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity.* Edited by Mike Featherstone, (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, 1990), pp. 311-328.

Arjun Appadurai. "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," In *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity,* Edited by Mike Featherstone, (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, 1990), pp. 295-310

Ulf Hannerz. *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. (London: Routledge, 1996).

Sharon Zukin. *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

Saskia Sassen. *Cities in a World Economy*. (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 1994).

6. Saskia Sassen. *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

7. Phrase taken from ACSA Call for papers

Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995): 153-185

8. Victor M. Valle and Rodolfo D. Torres, *Latino Metropolitan*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000): 69

Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, pp. 3-11; 155-157

9. Appadurai, "Disjuncture," p. 301

10. John Durham Peters. "Seeing Bifocally: Media, Place, Culture." In *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*, Edited by Akhil Gupta & James Ferguson, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 75-92.

11. Oliver Zunz. "The Changing Face of Inequality: Urbanization, Industrial Development and Immigrants in Detroit, 1880-1920," In *Journal of Social History* 17 (Spring, 1984), pp. 522-523

John Bodnar, Robert Simon and Michael P. Weber. *Lives of Their Own*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983).

Herbert Gans. *The Urban Villagers: Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans*. (New York: Free Press, 1982).

12. Roger Waldinger, Howard Aldrich, Robin Ward and Associates, eds. *Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Immigrant Business in Industrial Societies*. Sage Series on Race and Ethnic Relations. vol. 1. (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, 1990).

13. Ivan H. Light and Steven J. Gold, *Ethnic Economies*, (San Diego: Academic Press, 2000): 16.

14. The classic sociological traditions come from Marx, Weber, and Sombart and their conceptual differentiation between traditional and modern capitalisms. The discourse of middleman minorities too implies that "advanced market societies" no longer supports traditional capitalism. Hence Bonacich and Modell discusses the role of immigrant sojourners, often from third world underdeveloped nations, and explains the uneasy middle social and economic position between modernity and tradition occupied by ethnic entrepreneurs.

Even more troublesome is the tradition of blurring the definitions of what constitutes an ethnic group and its economy. Scholars such as Light, Bonacich, and Modell often refer to African Americans, Jewish, South Asian, Cuban, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Polish, Italian businesses as ethnic enterprise. But a close inspection of

these categories shows us that they are based on religious, racial, cultural, and national considerations. As Omi and Winnant argue, ethnicity is a slippery racialized code-word that merely distinguishes the native-born American Anglo Saxon majority from every other group that doesn't fit that definition. Such a process effectively marks a non-white while rendering the white subject invisible and un-categorizable. Also, as Rick Bonus points out in his research on Filipino stores in Southern California, the ethnic group is often heterogeneous – internally fractured by class, race, religion, nationality, gender, and occupation.

Ivan H Light, *Ethnic Enterprise in America: Business and Welfare among Chinese, Japanese, and Blacks*. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1972).

Michael Omi, and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From 1960s to the 1990*. (New York: Routledge, 1994).

Edna Bonacich, and John Modell. *The Economic Basis of Ethnic Solidarity: Small Business in Japanese American Community*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

Rick Bonus. *Locating Filipino Americans: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

15. Kim refers to recent immigrants. In 1965, the revised immigration laws in the United States resulted in immigration from countries and regions in Asia, South America, and Africa. Previous racist laws had prohibited immigration from these places. These laws also changed the class-constitution of the new immigrants. Initially the occupation-based system allowed non-white, middle class, skilled immigrants to enter the United States. By the 1980s family reunification clauses brought business entrepreneurs and working class immigrants changing the demographics of the South Asian immigrant community. The middle class skilled immigrants settled into suburban neighborhoods while many working class immigrants continued to live in ethnic enclaves.

Illsoo Kim. *The New Urban Immigrants: The Korean Community in New York*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

16. Wilbur Zelinsky and Barrett A. Lee, "Heterolocalism: An Alternative Model of the Sociospatial Behaviour of Immigrant Ethnic Communities." In *International Journal of Population Geography*. 1998 Dec;4(4):281-98.

Zelinsky explains, "an alternative model, labeled heterolocalism, ... suggests that members of certain newly arrived groups may be able to sustain their identity as an ethnic community despite immediate or rapid spatial dispersion."

See also Melvin Webber, "Order in Diversity: Community without Proximity." In Wingo, L., ed., *Cities and Space: The Future Use of Urban Land*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1963): 23-54.

17. Rick Bonus, *Locating Filipino American: Ethnicity and the Cultural Politics of Space*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000).

Alfred Yee, *Shopping at Giant Foods: Chinese American Supermarkets in Northern California*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003)

Joseph Wood, "Vietnamese American Place Making in Northern Virginia, In *Geographical Review* 87 (January 1997): 58-72.

Madhulika S. Khandelwal, *Becoming American, Being India: An Immigrant Community in New York City*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

Zukin, *Cultures of Cities*.

See also, Newbold K.B.; Spindler J. "Immigrant Settlement Patterns in Metropolitan Chicago" In *Urban Studies* 38 (1 October 2001): 1903-1919.

18. Bonus, *Locating*, p. 75

19. The area between First Street and San Pablo is called West Berkeley. Small working class cottages are interspersed with warehouses in this neighborhood. VIKS is located in this area.

Originally part of Oceanview, a working class town that existed in this location since 1853, this community was incorporated into the city of Berkeley in 1878. Irish immigrants also worked in Ocean View's mills and plants, often joined by Scandinavians, Canadians, Mexicans and Chileans, among others. By the end of the nineteenth century, Germans outnumbered Irish as the largest foreign-born group, and Italians, Portuguese and a small population of African Americans had also been added to the mix. Chinese worked in some of the mills and also operated laundries. Chinese farmers raised fruits and vegetables on small rented plots, selling the products door-to-door. In the early twentieth century, West Berkeley became home to a growing Finnish population, and the Finnish Hall, still located on Tenth Street, is tangible evidence of that once-thriving community. Until at least the 1920s, the majority of the population was made up of immigrants and their American-born children.

20. Speaking of the West Berkeley neighborhood in the 80s, Indian storeowner Anil Thakkar reminisces, "It was a mess when I came in 1984. All these hookers used to hang around."

Catherine Bowman, "Whole Indian Access: Shiva Statues Join Saris and Spice on Berkeley's University Avenue," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 October 1997, pp. EB2.

21. He also stated, "There has been an increase of 418,527 square feet of office space in all of West Berkeley (the MU-LI, MU-R, M, and MM and C-W districts) since 1993, 61.5% of the total projected by West Berkeley Plan. This increase is on target with the office development rate anticipated by the West Berkeley Plan, —680,000 square feet by 2005. 39% of this conversion and development was due to office conversion in the MU-LI district. Most of this office conversion and development took place in 1999 and 2000, which may lead to a perception of over-development. ...Since 1997, Light Industry/Warehouse/Laboratory and Live/Work growth also occurred in the same time period in West Berkeley, totaling 152,909 square feet."

Weldon Rucker, City Manager, Action calendar, Recommendation to the Mayor and City Council, "Proposed Moratorium On Office Uses And Conversion Of Space To Office Uses In The MU/LI District" April 17, 2001,

22. The word chaat means "to lick," in Hindi, and although chaat used to be considered humble food with a taint of the street, it is now fashionable in India and in the US to have a chaat station, even at elegant weddings.

23. The success of VIKS encouraged copycat Indian fast-food businesses along University Avenue. (Chaat Café, 1902 University Avenue; Chaat Corner in Viceroy India Cuisine, 48 Shattuck Square), San Pablo (Shan Chat House, 2072 San Pablo Avenue) and Shattuck Avenue (Taj Express, 2012 Shattuck Avenue). Yet none of these new restaurants have achieved the economic success of VIKS.

24. Sam Whiting "The Full Berkeley Preserving West Berkeley's colorful past" In *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sunday, January 23, 2005

25. Ethnic enterprise literature often refers to niche economies and niche markets when small businesses (supply) serve the specific needs of a small group of customers (demand niche). In case of Koreans in Los Angeles this niche market was not co-ethnic since they served the largely African American community.

26. Clutter is the word most commonly used by the customers to describe the interior of the grocery store. But the definition of clutter is in the eye of the beholder. To the immigrants the clutter and disorder serves as heart-warming reminder of nostalgic familiarity set in contrast to the impersonal layout of American retail chains. As a customer explained, clutter actually, "... Make sense. I mean things are organized in a certain way. Stuff is organized but it doesn't seem. Some how it doesn't seem [to have] any [order]. But it [the merchandise] is generally organized. In aisles, lots and lots of different products. But you will have to know about it."

Interview with C/St997, Berkeley, California, 7 March 1997.

27. R. W. Apple Jr., "Journeys; In Berkeley, Strollers Find Art With Curb Appeal," In *New York Times*, Travel Section (January 17, 2003)

28. Observing the weekend and weekday crowd over a period of one year between 2001 and 2002 I found that VIKS café catered to co ethnic as well as non co ethnic groups while the grocery store had a majority of co-ethnic customers.

29. Appadurai, "Disjunctures," p. 301.

30 Joseph A. Schumpeter. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*. (London: Unwin University Books, 1942) p. 81.